



Learner's Name: Angelina Whitman

Age: 15

Location: Mobile, Alabama

How would you summarize your background?

I was born in 2010, in Mobile, Alabama. Mobile was expanding pretty rapidly at that time because of a big new steel plant. My mom did lots of different jobs as I was growing up, but they were all pretty temporary. It's not her fault that she changed jobs a lot, they were just that kind of work – seasonal retail, or cleaning jobs, that kind of thing.

Tell me more about your experiences and your family's background.

I feel that I don't have much of anything. We're really poor. That's why we're always moving around to jump the rent, or whatever. I don't really know anything about my family or my history. I don't have roots or traditions.

I look pretty white, so I guess that my ancestors came out of Europe at some point, but my mom never talks about her family or my dad or any of that stuff. She also always listens to whatever pops up on the music pod, and watches whatever is easy to tune into onscreen when she sits down. We don't really make any choices about stuff like that.

How do you like to learn?

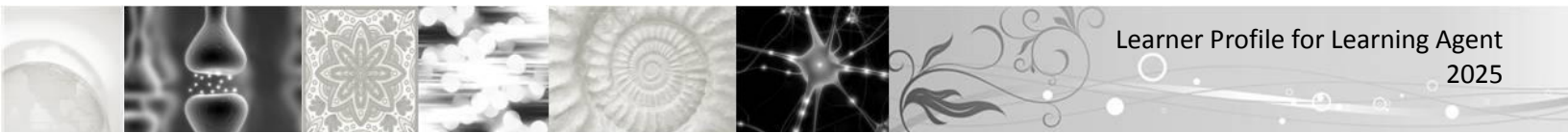
I find it real hard to sit still, and to be quiet. I've moved around a lot and had some bad things happen in my life. I had a learning fitness instructor once who said I had post-traumatic stress disorder, and that talking and moving were my response to anxiety. She gave me some tranquilizers. I don't know if they helped me learn anything, but I could sure sit still for an hour. But then we moved again, and I my mom didn't do anything to help me get more refills on the prescription.

How would you describe your current learning experiences?

I'm in a pretty run of the mill classroom-style school because we can't afford to do anything special and my mom is all right with my doing whatever is easiest. I like the history classes I have now. The content specialist gives us information by telling lots of stories, and links local, national, and global events. I have always found reading easy, although I don't do it much, so I'm following along with the course work. Now that we can just take a board exam, and don't have to just fulfill credits, he says I could take my exam at the end of this year. I just need to persuade mom to stay put for a few more months so he'll authorize it.

Please provide an overview of your learning experiences so far.

I've moved around a lot and have gone to lots of different learning centers. They've pretty much been barebones four walls, not much else brought in and not much chance to get out and do stuff. There



have been times when I haven't gone to a learning center at all. I've missed out on learning certain things, and I feel as though I can never catch up.

I hate the augmented kids. There were a lot at one learning center I went to because there were a lot of pretty middle class kids there. I feel like it's cheating to do that to yourself. Although some people say it's just like plastic surgery and I guess most people have that done now. My mom says that when I was born it was still pretty rare.

What do you find most motivating?

I don't really care about learning. I'm always the new person, and always starting again, since everything I've had access to has been so tied to a single place. I just want to be old enough to get a job, any job, so that my mom will stop nagging me to show up at the learning center and I can get my own place.

What you hope to do when you are older?

I want a place of my own that I can stay at. I'll make it real nice and comfortable, and I'll be able to have friends over. I'll do any kind of job it takes to get that.

What worries you as you think about your future?

How can you help me to feel engaged with a world that doesn't seem to care whether I'm there or not? How can I feel that I'm getting somewhere with learning, instead of feeling as though I'm starting over every time? How can I make the most of what's available like all the rich kids do?